

# **EPA Climate Change and Water News**

## **June 21, 2013**

The *EPA Climate Change and Water News* is a bi-weekly newsletter from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Water that features news and information about EPA and other federal agencies related to climate change and water. Partner activities, as well as related events and publications, are also included.

For more information on climate change and water, please visit our website:  
<http://www.epa.gov/water/climatechange>.

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### **U.S. EPA News**

#### **EPA's Climate Ready Water Utilities and Climate Ready Estuaries Initiatives Release Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Planning Reports**

EPA's Climate Ready Water Utilities (CRWU) initiative and the Climate Ready Estuaries (CRE) initiative have released two new reports that document the joint use of the Climate Resilience Evaluation and Awareness Tool (CREAT) between water systems and the Morro Bay and Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Programs (NEP). In both pilots, CREAT was used to identify current and future climate threats and adaptation options. In Morro Bay, participants used CREAT to focus on sustainable groundwater yields considering how changes in precipitation and sea level rise would impact groundwater levels and saltwater intrusion. In the Albemarle-Pamlico NEP, water systems in the towns of Manteo and Columbia used CREAT to focus on sea level rise and intense storm events. This project demonstrated how small communities and utilities can use CREAT to build awareness of the potential impacts from climate change and begin planning to adapt to these new conditions. The reports document the CREAT risk assessment process, results and reports, and next steps for the NEPs involved. They can be viewed at [www.epa.gov/climatereadyutilities](http://www.epa.gov/climatereadyutilities) under the Tools and Resources tab.

#### **EPA Announces Application Period for 2014 Climate Leadership Awards: June 24-September 13, 2013**

State and local entities are invited to apply for the third annual Climate Leadership Awards. The application period runs from June 24 to September 13, 2013. The Climate Leadership Awards recognize and incentivize exemplary corporate, organizational, and individual leadership in response to climate change. The awards ceremony takes place during the Climate Leadership Conference, which will be held in San Diego, California on February 25, 2014. EPA co-sponsors the Climate Leadership Awards with three partners: The Association of Climate Change Officers, the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, and The Climate Registry. In February 2013, the second annual awards were presented to two individuals and 21 organizations from across the United States who are leading the way in the management and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The 2013 winners included the following local and regional governments and agencies: Boulder County, Colorado, the City of Austin, Texas, the Port of San Diego, and the Sonoma County Water Agency. To see a full list of the 2013 winners, please visit: <http://www.epa.gov/climateleadership/awards/2013winners.html>. For more information on the 2014 Climate Leadership Awards and the application process, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/climateleadership/>.

### **EPA's Science Matters Newsletter Focuses on Climate Change Research**

The current issue of EPA's Science Matters focuses on how EPA researchers and partners are developing the latest climate change science and incorporating it into strategies and actions to protect human health and the environment. The issue includes stories on: using climate models and watershed simulations to better understand climate change effects on streams and rivers; protecting salmon from warming waters in the South Fork Nooksack River Watershed; as well as a Q&A podcast with the Associate Director for Climate for the Air, Climate, and Energy Research Program. To view this issue of Science Matters, visit: <http://epa.gov/sciencematters/>

### **Other U.S. Federal Agency News**

#### **NOAA's National Climatic Data Center (NCDC) Releases 2012 Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters Information**

2012 saw 11 weather and climate disaster events each with losses exceeding \$1 billion in damages. This makes 2012 the second costliest year since 1980, with a total of more than \$110 billion in damages throughout the year. The 2012 total damages rank only behind 2005, which incurred \$160 billion in damages due in part to four devastating land-falling hurricanes. The 2012 billion-dollar events included seven severe weather and tornado events, two tropical cyclone events, and the yearlong drought and its associated wildfires. These 11 events killed over 300 people and had devastating economic effects on the areas impacted. The two major drivers of the damage costs in 2012 were Sandy at approximately \$65 billion and the yearlong drought at approximately \$30 billion. To learn more and to read the NCDC's report, visit: <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/news/ncdc-releases-2012-billion-dollar-weather-and-climate-disasters-information>.

### **Other News**

#### **Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) Launches Tribal Climate Change Website, Newsletter, Webinars, and Regional Adaptation Courses**

The Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals has launched a website to provide information and resources tailored to helping Native people gain a better understanding of climate change and its impacts on their communities. The website includes basic climate change information; profiles of Tribes in diverse regions of the United States, including Alaska, who are coping with climate change impacts; audio files of elders discussing the issue from traditional perspectives; and resources and contacts to use in developing climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies. A monthly newsletter, to which one can subscribe, provides announcements about funding opportunities, conferences, training, and other information relevant to tribal climate change issues. A number of upcoming trainings, courses, and webinars are also mentioned on the site, including one on Climate Change Adaptation Planning. To learn more, visit:

<http://www4.nau.edu/tribalclimatechange/index.asp>.

### **Pacific Institute Releases Report: "An Overview of the 'New Normal' and Water Rate Basics"**

California is facing new challenges to sustainable water management, particularly when it comes to financing. Climate change, increasing costs, and an uncertain economy mean that water service providers can no longer rely on past levels of supply, consumption, or revenue to predict future conditions. New research from the Pacific Institute analyzes different rate structures that can be used to accommodate this 'new normal' so that a utility is able to meet costs and ensure resiliency in an uncertain future. The most common water rate structures - flat fees, uniform rates, block rates, and water budget rates - require varying levels of financial, institutional, and human capacity to implement. The report examines the rate structures and the characteristics of the 'New Normal', which includes more uncertain water supply; new legislation, codes, and standards; and overall increasing costs to provide a safe drinking water supply. To access this report, visit: <http://www.pacinst.org/news/california-water-rates-and-the-new-normal/>.

### **Early Career Climate Change Forum Launches Online**

This Forum grew out of a week-long workshop known as the Northwest Climate Science boot camp, sponsored by the Northwest Climate Science Center. The Forum consists of early career scientists, managers, and others working at the science management interface on climate change issues. The intention of the Forum's website is to provide a space for early career climate researchers and climate professionals to explore new ideas, network, and find support to help them excel in their chosen paths. Additionally, the Forum strives to be an accessible outlet where all people can come and learn about climate science from people intimately involved with studying the climate and its implications for ecosystems and people. To learn more, visit: <http://eccforum.csc.alaska.edu/>.